Forget the booze — get buzzed on Buddha

Vancouver's first New Year's Eve Buddha Rave promises to make revellers high on life PAGE 6

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VANCOUVER metro®

Monday, December 17, 2012

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'These tragedies must end'

Newtown, Conn.
Barack Obama pays tribute to the victims of Friday's mass shooting

He spoke for a nation in sorrow, but the slaughter of all those little boys and girls left U.S. President Barack Obama, like so many others, reaching for words. Alone on a spare stage, Obama was a parent in grief.

"I am very mindful that mere words cannot match the depth of your sorrow, nor can they heal your wounded hearts," Obama said at an evening vigil in the grieving community of Newtown, Conn. "I can only hope that it helps for you to know that you are not alone in your grief."

The massacre on Friday of 26 children and adults at Sandy Hook Elementary elicited horror around the world, soul-searching in the United States, fresh political debate about gun control and questions about what drove the suspect to act.

It also left a newly re-elected president openly grappling for bigger answers. "Can we say that we're truly doing enough to give all the children of this country the chance they deserve to live out their lives in happiness and with purpose? I've been reflecting on this the last few days," Obama said, as some in the audience wept.

Obama vowed to use "whatever power this office holds" to prevent more tragedies like Newtown. OLIVIER DOULIERY/POOL/GETTY IMAGES

"If we're honest with ourselves, the answer is no."

He promised to lead a national effort to end such catastrophes. "What choice do we have?" he said. "Are we really prepared to say that we're powerless in the face of such carnage, that the politics are too hard?

"We can't tolerate this any more. These tragedies must end. And to end them, we must change."

He closed his remarks by slowly reading the first names of each of the 26 victims.

For Obama, ending his fourth year in office, it was another sorrowful visit to another community in disbelief. All the victims were killed up close by multiple rifle shots. The toll: six adults and 20 boys and girls, all of whom were just six or seven years old.

Privately, Obama told Connecticut Gov. Dannel Malloy that Friday was the most difficult day of his presidency.

The president first met privately with families of the victims and with the emergency personnel who responded to the shootings. That meeting happened at Newtown High School, the site of Sunday night's interfaith vigil.

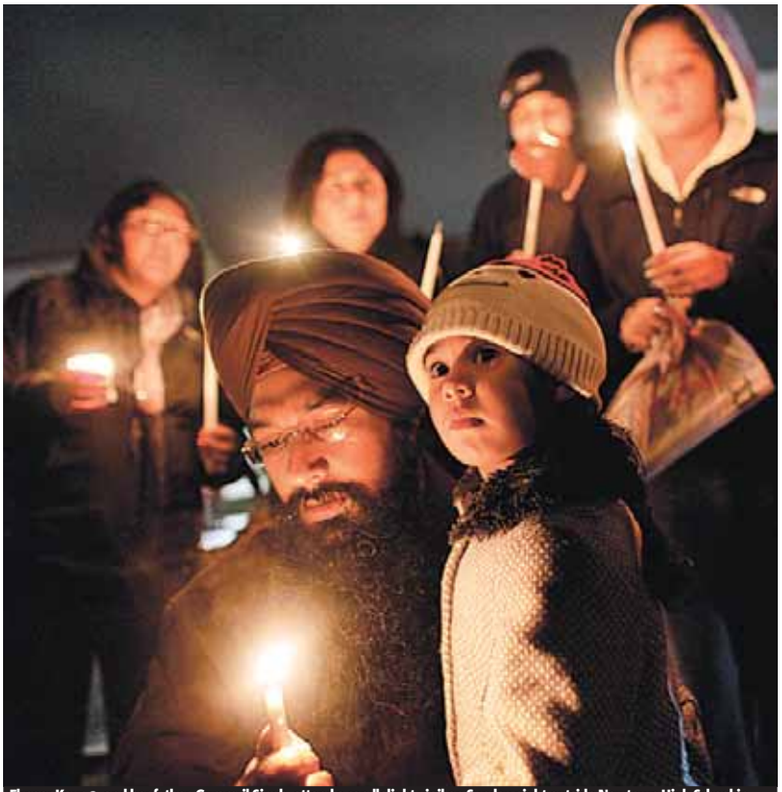
"We're halfway between grief and hope," said Curt Brantl, whose fourth-grade daughter was in the library of the elementary school when the shootings occurred. She was not harmed.

"We needed this," said the Rev. Matt Crebbin, senior minister of the Newtown Congregational Church. "We need to be together here in this room..... We needed to be together to show that we are together and united."

Still, many of Newtown's 27,000 people wondered if life could ever return to normal.

"I feel like we have to get back to normal but I don't know if there is a normal anymore," said Kim Camputo, mother of two children, ages five and 10, who attend a different school. "I'll definitely be dropping them off and picking them up myself for a while."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Eknoor Kaur, 3, and her father, Guramril Singh, attend a candlelight vigil on Sunday night outside Newtown High School in Connecticut before an interfaith vigil with President Barack Obama. Obama delivered an impassioned speech in memory of the shooting victims of Sandy Hook Elementary School. More coverage, pages 4 & 9. JASON DECROW/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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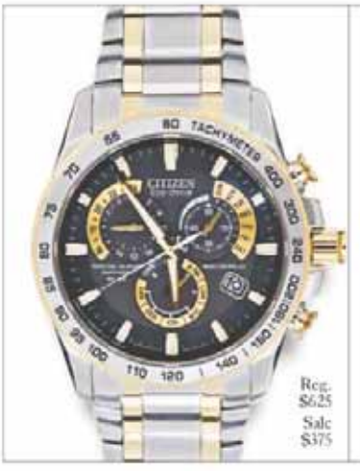

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Metro reporters share their fave stories of 2012.
Brayden gets his wheels back

I'm pretty fond of my own two wheels, so when 20-year-old Brayden Walterhouse wrote to Metro in August to say his bike had been stolen while he was working out at the gym in Surrey, I sympathized.

But this was no ordinary bike. Brayden, a fiercely independent young man who stocks shelves part-time at Home Depot, is deaf and has cerebral palsy. His parents spent a small fortune on an electric-bike kit so he could keep up on family bike trips and get around town without the pain and difficulty of riding a regular bike.

After Metro ran the story, several people phoned and emailed us to ask how they could help out. Ultimately, Velocity Cycles in Langley and one incredibly generous anonymous donor teamed up and replaced the whole thing free of charge, and Brayden, in turn, vowed to "pay it forward."

With so much murder and mayhem in the world, it's stories like these that restore my faith in humanity, and for that I owe everyone involved a huge debt of gratitude.

KATE WEBB/METRO

Brayden Walterhouse
KATE WEBB/METRO FILE

Have your say

Vote for the top stories of 2012 at metronews.ca before Thursday. Readers' picks will be published on Friday.

Tuesday: Reporter Matt Kieltyka

Rendering of the proposed South Surrey casino and entertainment complex. A public hearing on the casino will be held at Surrey city hall in January.
CONTRIBUTED

Janitors back proposed South Surrey casino

Controversial project. Tornado Building Maintenance joins nearly 40 companies who have thrown support behind complex

EMILY JACKSON
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Floors to wash, sinks to clean and ceilings to dust.

That's what commercial janitorial company Tornado Building Maintenance sees when it looks at the proposed casino and entertainment complex in South Surrey, a plan it fully supports, project manager Ana Del Pio said Sunday.

"There's more to the casino than gambling and negative attention," Del Pio said of Gateway Casinos & Entertainment Ltd.'s controversial proposal to build a casino, 192-room hotel, restaurants and convention centre at 10 Avenue and 168 Street. "Casinos provide a lot of jobs for everyone."

Though Tornado doesn't yet have a contract to do janitorial work at the casino, it would welcome the opportunity as it has worked with Gateway before and calls it as a good employer, she said.

Most of the employees at the Delta-based company live in Surrey and travel to Vancouver, Langley and New Westminster for work, Del Pio said. A local casino would decrease the cost of commuting and keep money in the community, she added.

"That means more time with family," she said. "Especially now with the toll on the (Port Mann) bridge it's harder; most people are choosing not to use that."

Tornado, with about 100 employees across B.C. and in Alberta, joins nearly 40 companies who support the casino including Frosting Cupcakery, PCL Constructors and Centennial Foodservice. The Surrey Board of Trade has also expressed support for the project.

But based on almost 6,000 pieces of correspondence received by the City of Surrey, about 65 per cent oppose the casino, according to a staff report.

Gateway's numbers paint a different picture. It says more than 7,900 residents and non-residents want the project completed.

A public hearing on the casino will be held at Surrey city hall on Jan. 14, 2013.

Accident. Cop killed in Surrey crash was speeding without police lights

The RCMP says a Mountie who was killed in a crash last month in Surrey was speeding as he tried to locate a stolen truck and did not have his emergency lights on at the time.

The police force is providing its first update into the death of 28-year-old Const. Adrian Oliver since shortly after the Nov. 13 crash, when Oliver's unmarked police cruiser collided with a transport truck.

The RCMP have issued a news release that says GPS and video evidence indicates Oliver was attempting to locate a stolen pick-up truck and, moments before the crash, he was travelling above the posted speed limit.

The news release says the cruiser's emergency lights and siren were not activated at the time.

Police have already said Oliver, who started his first posting with the RCMP in June, 2009, was nearing the end of a 12-hour shift at the time of the crash.

The RCMP say its criminal collision unit continues to investigate the crash with external oversight by the Vancouver Police Department.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Near Clearwater

Body of pregnant teacher found

The body of a pregnant Grade 1 teacher, Courtney Buck, was found on Friday after a vehicle she was in with her husband plunged 30 metres down an embankment and into a river near Clearwater.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Low-lying areas

Delta on alert over storm surge

Emergency crews for the municipality of Delta were on standby Sunday as they prepared for a storm surge and possible localized flooding in low-lying areas of Tsawwassen.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Vancouver school board reassures kids of safety

Help available. School counsellors on hand to talk to students affected by killings in Newtown

EMILY JACKSON
emily.jackson@metronews.ca

A man helps a young girl up the stairs while carrying her backpack as they arrive for services at Trinity Church Sunday in Newtown, Conn. JASON DECROW/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

For a child frightened by media coverage of Friday's devastating elementary-school massacre, Connecticut might seem as close to home as Coquitlam.

That's why the Vancouver School Board is working to reassure children — and parents — that shooting incidents are relatively rare, the tragedy occurred far away and school is one of the safest places to be, VSB chair Patti Bacchus said Sunday.

The board sent advice to schools and staff in case children express worries and ask questions about the Newtown gunman who killed 20 first graders and seven adults, Bacchus said.

The advice may also be distributed to parents.

"Generally what we advise is to limit TV and Internet viewing among younger children as much as possible," she said. "Answer questions factually and age appropriately, then move on.

"We encourage parents to really listen to children's concerns," she added.

School counsellors will be on hand to talk to students who seem especially affected by the tragedy.

With the help of Vancouver police, the board has developed thorough procedures for emergencies and intruders, Bacchus said.

Citing security concerns, she said she couldn't discuss the procedures in detail, saying only that preparatory drills are held a couple of times a year. She added that if someone spots a stranger at a school they should contact the office immediately.

Yet the most important step in the wake of the tragedy and the intense media attention is to reassure children that such events are not common, Bacchus said.

"We need to stress this is very unusual. It's not something we suggest people be worrying about day to day."

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Things that make you go 'ohm': Buddha Rave

New Year's Eve. Substance-free celebration features mocktails, meditation

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Vancouver's first Buddha Rave wants to prove that parties without alcohol don't have to be boring.

The New Year's Eve celebration hopes to make its 600 partygoers naturally intoxicated with good vibes and positivity.

"Yes, people go out drinking and get smashed so the next day they have a hangover," said Nayna Trehan, one of the lead volunteer coordinators for Buddha Rave. "But that's not exactly the way people like to enter the new year. Some people like to usher the New Year in with a positive attitude or being uplifted."

Will Blunderfield will perform, as will electro-fusion DJ A-Slam, and there will be vegetarian delights and gourmet mocktails. Partygoers will also be guided in a countdown meditation 10 minutes before the new year hits.

"That will give power to our resolutions, and we want to uplift people to give them that support to fulfil all their new year's resolutions," Trehan said.

The party will be held at the Yaletown Roundhouse Galleria starting at 9 p.m. on Dec. 31. All proceeds from the event will go to leadership and empowerment workshops for Vancouver youth and the global organization Care for Children.

Buddha Rave is a substance-free New Year's Eve celebration where revellers welcome 2013 through a countdown meditation. SHASHANK JAIN/CONTRIBUTED

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Community. Unnamed donor helps make Taylor Manor facelift a reality

A supportive-housing project in East Vancouver being funded by a $30-million donation from an anonymous benefactor was sparked by a cold call to city council.

The project at Taylor Manor was approved by council on Thursday and will provide on-site support for 56 people who have histories of mental illness and are homeless or at risk of being homeless.

Renovations on the 97-year-old building will start mid-2013. The city expects it will be operational by winter 2014-15.

Coun. Kerry Jang said it's the first time in his experience that someone was adamant about providing ongoing operating funding.

Donors, he said, normally want to fund buildings or what they see as tangible assets.

"The donor said, 'I want it to feel like a home,'" said Jang. "They had a very clear vision on what the home would be."

Taylor Manor, which is on Boundary Road at Venables Street, will be renovated to include 56 residential units as well as kitchen and dining facilities, reading, lounge and TV areas, a BBQ deck and a community garden.

A clear vision

"The donor said, 'I want it to feel like a home.'"

Coun. Kerry Jang
on the anonymous benefactor who gave $30 million to the project

The anonymous benefactor will work with the Kettle Friendship Society to operate the project.

Mayor Gregor Robertson said in a statement that 93 per cent of Vancouver's homeless population face mental illness.

"Taylor Manor is an excellent example of the kind of housing partnerships we need to ensure that our residents can transition into healthier and safer lives," he said.

Vancouver has now built or announced 1,807 units of supportive housing, 343 units short of its 2014 goal of 2,150.

Jang said city council has an eye on other options for the remaining 343 units.

CARA MCKENNA/FOR METRO

Health

Watch out for toxic seafood

The B.C. Centre for Disease Control is warning people not to eat clams, salmon and other seafood sold by a private distributor in Port Hardy because of the risk of shellfish poisoning and botulism.

The products include frozen and jarred clams, frozen barbecue salmon and canned salmon in clam juice, all of which were sold online and through other means.

The centre says anyone who bought the products should throw them out and that cooking will not destroy potential toxins.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Legal matters

Hill slapped with $250 fine for lobbyist blunder

A former Conservative MP has been fined $250 for misrepresenting himself when he registered as a lobbyist in B.C.

Jay Hill was the MP for Prince George–Peace River for 17 years before his signed up as a lobbyist.

But government officials ruled Hill registered without having been hired by anyone to do any lobbying — a violation of the rules — and he was fined $2,500.

Hill appealed and the fine was reduced to $250.

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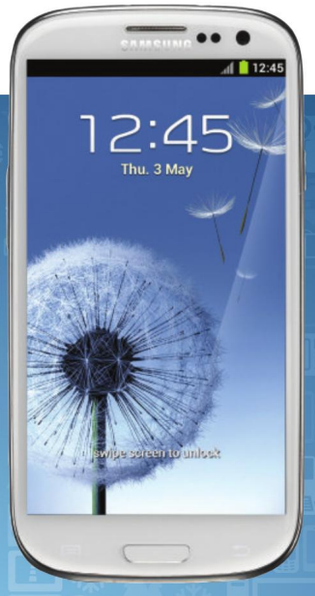

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School massacre. Leftover ammo suggests an even deadlier plan: Police

The gunman in the Connecticut shooting rampage was carrying an arsenal of hundreds of rounds of especially deadly ammunition — enough to kill just about every student in the school if given enough time, authorities said on Sunday, raising the chilling possibility that the bloodbath could have been even worse.

Hours later, President Barack Obama told mourners at a vigil that the nation is failing to keep its children safe. He pledged to seek change in memory of the 26 teachers and schoolchildren who were killed in the second-deadliest school shooting in U.S. history.

The gunman, Adam Lanza, shot himself in the head just as he heard police drawing near to the classroom where he was slaughtering helpless children, but he had more ammunition at the ready.

Police said they found hundreds of unused bullets at the school, which enrolled about 450 students in kindergarten through fourth grade.

"There was a lot of ammo, a lot of clips," said state police Lt. Paul Vance. "Certainly a lot of lives were potentially saved."

Adam Lanza posing for a photo that appeared in the Newtown High School yearbook. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The chief medical examiner has said the ammunition was the type designed to inflict the maximum amount of damage.

The disclosure on Sunday sent shudders throughout this picturesque New England community as grieving families sought to comfort each other during church services.

With so much grieving left to do, many of Newtown's 27,000 people wondered whether life could ever return to normal. And as the workweek was set to begin, parents weighed whether to send their own children back to school. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

No one harmed

Churchgoers flee after phone threat

Worshippers hurriedly left St. Rose of Lima Church in Newtown on Sunday when someone phoned in a threat. The threat interrupted a crowded mass and touched off a large police response days after the worst massacre of school-age children in U.S. history.

Eight child victims, the gunman and his mother attended St. Rose of Lima. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

More online

Read and see more about the Newton, Conn., school shooting at metronews.ca, including:

- Portraits of shooting victims show lives at their very start, ended in a hail of gunfire
- Gunman's father speaks of sympathy, heartbreak
- Many employees at Connecticut school being hailed as heroes in wake of deadly shooting

U.S. Democrats call for gun restrictions

Second Amendment doubts. Advocates say the latest shooting in Connecticut could be a tipping point in contentious debate

Democratic lawmakers said Sunday that military-style assault weapons should be banned and that a national commission should be established to examine mass shootings in the United States.

The proposals were among the first to come from Congress in the wake of Friday's school shooting in Newtown, Conn.

"Assault weapons were developed for the U.S. military, not commercial gun manufacturers," independent Sen. Joe Lieberman, a former Democrat, said before a vigil Sunday night in Newtown.

"This is a moment to start a very serious national conversation about violence in our society, particularly about these acts of mass violence," said the Connecticut senator.

Gun-rights activists remained largely quiet on the issue, all but one declining to appear on the Sunday talk shows. Meanwhile, Democrats vowed action and said it was time to hear from voters — not gun lobbyists — on how to prevent the next shooting.

Speaking Sunday night at a vigil in Newtown, President Barack Obama did not specifically address gun control. But he vowed, "In the coming weeks I'll use whatever power this office holds to engage my fellow citizens, from law enforcement to mental-health professionals to parents and educators in an effort aimed at preventing more tragedies like this."

Cheryl Girardi, of Middletown, Conn., kneels beside 26 teddy bears, each representing a victim of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting, at a sidewalk memorial on Sunday in Newtown, Conn. A gunman walked into the elementary school in Newtown on Friday and opened fire, killing 26 people. DAVID GOLDMAN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Congress has frequently turned to independent bipartisan commissions to try to solve the nation's worst problems, including the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, the Iraq war and the failing economy. But lawmakers are often reluctant to act on the recommendations of outsiders, especially if they think it will cost them support in their home states.

Still, Lieberman defended the idea of a national commission as the only way to ensure that the "heartbreak and anger" of the Connecticut shooting doesn't dissipate over time. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Deadly politics

Obama and Senate Democrats haven't pushed for new gun controls since rising to power in the 2008 national elections. Outspoken advocates for stricter laws, including Sen. Dianne Feinstein, say that's because of the powerful sway of the National Rifle Association.

- **Tipping point.** But advocates also say the latest shooting is a tipping point that could change the dynamic of the debate dramatically. Feinstein said she will propose legislation next year that would ban big clips, drums and strips of more than 10 bullets.
- **Bloomberg.** New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg said Obama could use executive powers to enforce existing gun laws, as well as throw his weight behind legislation like Feinstein's.

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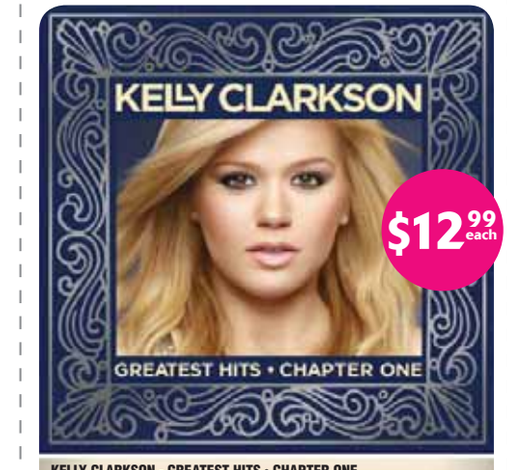

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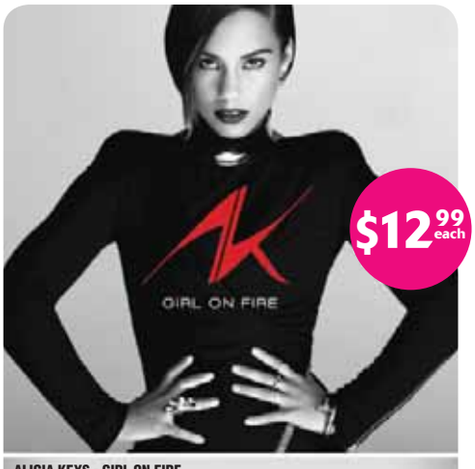

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Allegations taint referendum vote

A man walks near barbed wire set up by protesters in Tahrir Square, in Cairo, Sunday. Key Egyptians rights groups called for another vote of the first round of the constitutional referendum. AMR NABIL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Egyptian constitution. Ruling party accused of tampering with polling stations

Egyptian rights groups called Sunday for a repeat of the first round of the constitutional referendum, alleging the vote was marred by widespread violations. Islamists who back the disputed charter claimed they were in the lead with a majority of "yes" votes, though official results have not been announced.

Representatives of seven rights groups charged that there was insufficient supervision by judges in Saturday's vote in 10 of Egypt's 27 provinces and independent monitors were prevented from witnessing vote counts.

The representatives told a news conference that they had reports of individuals falsely identifying themselves as judges, of women prevented from voting and that members of Islamist President Mohammed Morsi's Muslim Brotherhood were allowed inside polling stations. They also complained that some polling centres closed earlier than scheduled and that Christians were denied entry to polling stations.

The vote is the latest stage in a near two-year struggle over Egypt's identity since the ouster of longtime leader Hosni Mubarak in a popular uprising.

The latest crisis over the Islamist-backed charter evolved into a fight — deadly at times — over whether Egypt should move toward a religious state under Morsi's Brotherhood and their ultraconservative Salafi allies, or one that retains secular traditions and an Islamic character.

Potentially adding to questions over the legitimacy of the vote is the low turnout in the first round — unofficially estimated at 32 per cent, which if confirmed would be far lower than the presidential or parliamentary elections following Mubarak's fall. A second round is to be held in the remaining 17 provinces on Saturday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Security

120,000

The number of army troops that were deployed to help police protect polling stations and state institutions.

Civil war. Iran proposes plans to end Syrian unrest

Iran is backing presidential elections in Syria as part of a six-point plan outlined Sunday to halt the 21-month civil war in Tehran's main Middle East ally.

The plan, described by state media and Iranian news agencies, also calls for efforts to halt the flow of weapons into Syria and to hold talks that include the government of Syrian President Bashar Assad.

Iran in the past has offered initiatives to end the Syrian bloodshed, but none are likely to gain any momentum with the main rebel forces that view Tehran as discredited by its close ties to Assad. On Saturday, Iran's Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi said Iran would do all it could to keep Assad in power.

Syrian President Bashar Assad
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

The latest proposals were offered during the opening of a two-day conference that includes 200 Syrian religious and political figures and envoys from countries including Syrian neighbours Turkey, Iraq and Lebanon, according to the semi-offical Fars news agency.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Japan

Right-wing party wins election

Japan's conservative Liberal Democratic Party returned to power in a landslide election victory Sunday after three years in opposition, according to early returns.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Headache

Clinton suffers a concussion

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton sustained a concussion last week after becoming extremely dehydrated and fainting while suffering from a stomach virus, the State Department said.

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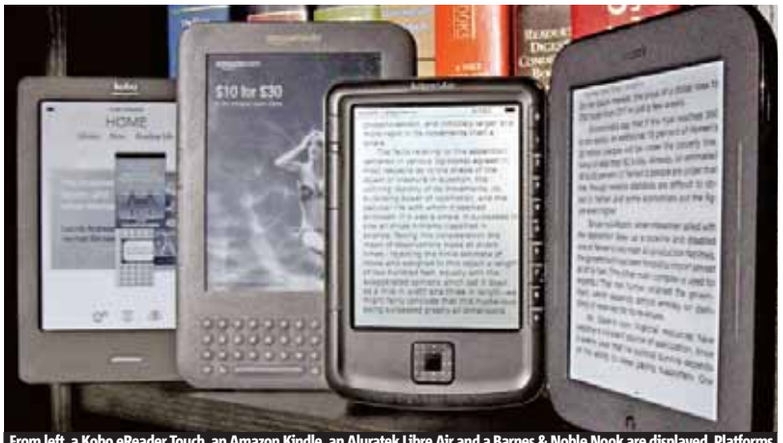
Avoiding the pitfalls of ebook self-publishing

Going it alone. Here are five tips to help you get in on the ebook explosion in 2013



From left, a Kobo eReader Touch, an Amazon Kindle, an Aluratek Libre Air and a Barnes & Noble Nook are displayed. Platforms that offer authors an alternate way to get published — including Kobo Writing Life, Amazon Kindle Direct Publishing and iBooks Author — have led to a boom in self-publishing. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

In 2012, Douglas & McIntyre filed for bankruptcy protection, Random House of Canada become the sole owner of McClelland & Stewart, and Penguin and Random House planned to merge.

It's perhaps no surprise that year also saw an explosion in online self-publishing, with a wealth of platforms — including Kobo Writing Life, Amazon Kindle Direct Publishing and iBooks Author — offering authors an alternate avenue.

"We're actually hearing from a lot of different types of authors, some brand new and some successful ... that have had traditional contracts that are just using self-publishing to experiment with new stuff or put books out that they wanted to do on a different cycle than their traditional publishers were," says Libby Johnson McKee, director of Kindle Direct Publishing.

If you have dreams of being a self-publishing sensation in 2013, here are tips on how to stand out in an increasingly crowded market:

1 The moment you start writing the book, begin building your marketing platform.

"The hardest thing about self-publishing is marketing, not writing, and people find this out too late," says California-based author Guy Kawasaki, who has self-published two books and explains how to do so in the newly released APE: Author, Publisher, Entrepreneur — How to Publish Your Book.

Kawasaki recommends spending two to three hours a day on writing, and one hour a day building a marketing platform on social media sites such as Google Plus, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

2 It sounds simple but —write a great book (and know your audience).

"Bad books just don't sell," says Johnson McKee. "And if you write a great book and really work hard on getting your message right, the craft of writing is still the thing that wins the day."

Browse blogs of authors in the same genre and understand what fans like to read.

3 Once the book is written, start crowdsourcing. Get fans, friends, colleagues and others to copy edit and/or review the book.

"Do this immediately before it goes on sale, so that as soon as it goes on sale you have a bunch of great reviews for the book," says Kawasaki (he sent APE in full format to about 1,000 people before he self-published it, and just three days after it went on sale it had about 135 online reviews).

"Proofreading and editing, though, is a skill and it's something that, just because you write, you might not be able to be the best editor," cautions Johnson McKee. "So if you can find somebody who has that skill and it actually is pretty affordable ... I would recommend trying to do that."

4 Lure in readers by putting your work on various sites and devices. And create catchy metadata, which includes the cover, title, description, biography, and price.

"People judge a book by its cover, they do, so I would strongly recommend that authors consider using a professional cover designer and investing the time and effort in that," says Mark Lefebvre, director of self-publishing and author relations at Kobo. As with an ebook's text, the cover can also be changed once it's out in digital format.

5 Write another great book as soon as possible. Lefebvre notes that passionate and dedicated readers will whip through a book and immediately check to see if authors have written anything else.

This rule is particularly important for genre writers, adds Johnson McKee. "Those types of readers are voracious," she says. "I heard some statistic that romance readers can read 10 books a week, and those are people who are just waiting for the next book to come out."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"(Authors) finish their book and they think: 'Oh, I'll put it on Amazon and boom, people will start buying it,' and they will find that is absolutely not true."

Author Guy Kawasaki, who has written a book on self-publishing

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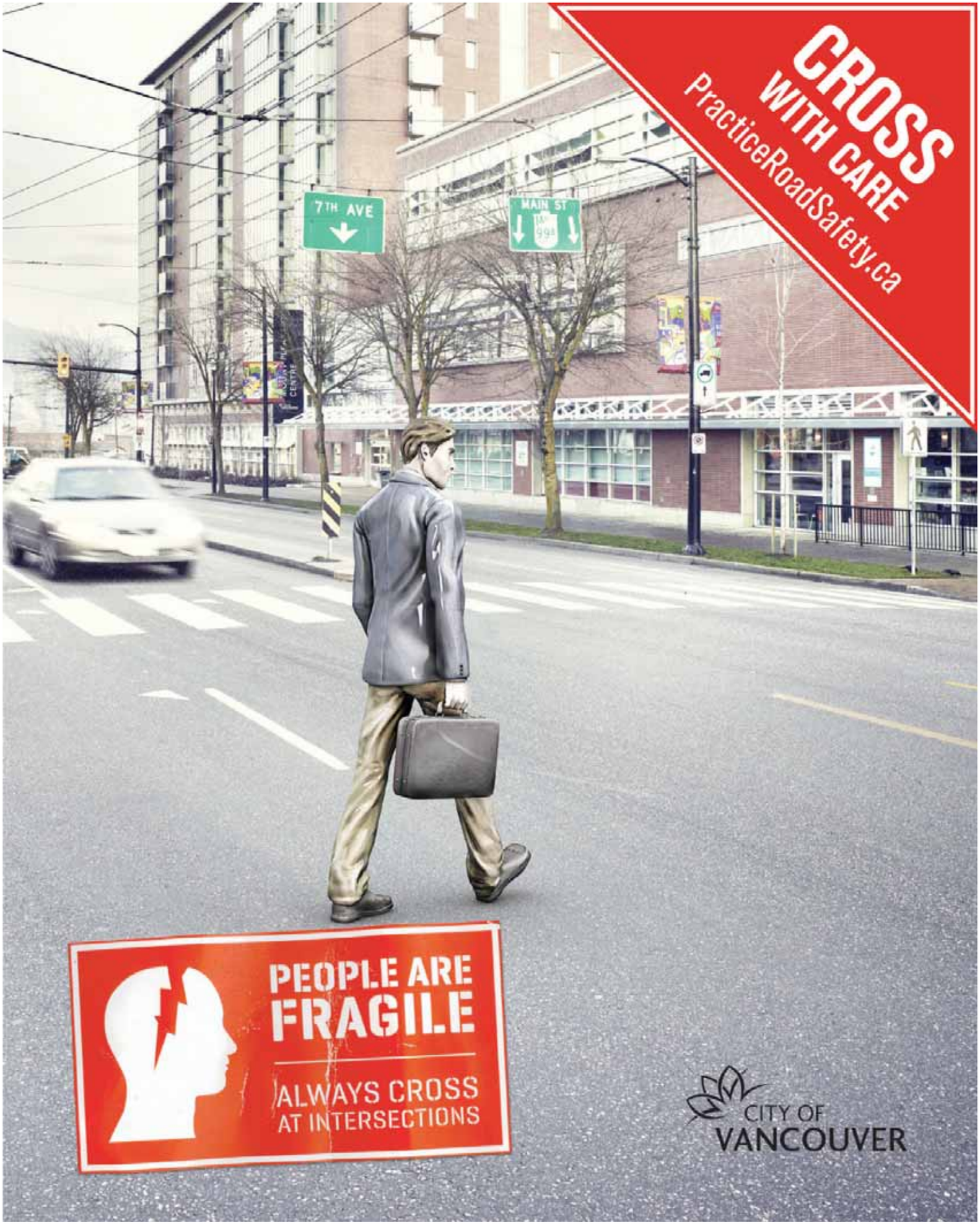
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2012'S TOP 10 STORIES ... ACCORDING TO ME

URBAN COMPASS
Paul Sullivan
vancouver@metronews.ca

Officially, there are still 15 days left in 2012. Anything could happen. The end of the world could happen.

But before you know it, it will be 2013, and the opportunity to look back on the biggest stories of 2012 will have expired like a jug of milk.

Here, then, are the top 10 stories of 2012 in Vancouver, as selected by your panel of expert journalists, i.e. me.

10. Middle-Aged Man in Lycra (MAMIL). I participated in my first triathlon and took an hour and a half off my previous best time in the Gran Fondo bike ride. Hey. You have your top stories of 2012. I have mine.

9. Translink had a very bad year. Transit police, fare evasion, management bonuses, bus driver assaults, phantom deficits, audits, excess taxes. Sometimes it seems as if we're all on a SkyTrain to Nowhere.

8. The Missing Women Inquiry: Later today, Wally Oppal's 1,448-page report on why police failed to catch Willie Pickton before he was able to murder so many women despite being a known suspect will finally be released to the public. It has already been discounted by many who think it depends too much on police testimony, and is biased, intentionally or otherwise, against aboriginal women and the poor.

7. Jenna Talackova took on Donald Trump and won. Sorta. The gorgeous Vancouver transsexual demanded the right to be able to participate in the Miss Universe pageant, and even the perpetually truculent Donald knew he was on the wrong side of history. She didn't win the pageant, but do you know who did? Do you even care?

6. John Furlong. The hero of the 2010 Olympics finds himself the target of allegations stemming from a stint as a teacher at a school attended by aboriginal children in Burns Lake in the late '60s and early '70s. The question: Why now? is trumped by that other question: Is it true?

5. Speaking of harassment. Former high-profile Mountie Cpl. Catherine Galliford filed a suit alleging 20 years of sexual harassment from a number of her fellow officers. That opened the flood gate and now there are least four other lawsuits of alleged abuse pending. Maintiens le Droit indeed.

4. The Port Mann Bridge. Now open at a bottleneck near you: the world's widest bridge. Traffic is now free to congeal further up the road. A rare victory for the automobile in this increasingly traffic-calmed era.

3. Pipeline! Christy Clark's battle with Alberta over the Enbridge pipeline; Enbridge's so-far ineffectual ad campaign extolling the virtue of piping sludge across Super Natural British Columbia. Kinder Morgan's attempt to squeeze one under the radar while everyone's complaining about Enbridge.

2. Christy Clark's re-election bid, a.k.a. Mission Impossible. This will be a bigger story in 2013. May 14, to be precise. Right now, the Enbridge pipeline looks like a better bet no matter how much she spends on feel-good ads.

1. Amanda Todd's suicide. Just maybe, this little girl's desperate last act will lead ever so slightly to a kinder, gentler world where people are nicer to each other. Let's at least pretend it's possible, in her name.

How much is the doggie made of chains?

NIRIT LEVAV PACKER/REX FEATURES

Recycled animal art

Bicycle chains get upcycled into art

An artist has created a series of incredibly detailed life-size dog sculptures made entirely from bicycle parts.

Israeli-born Nirit Levav Packer's collection includes a full-size greyhound, cocker spaniels and other mutts constructed from recycled bike chains, gears, pedals and even bike seats.

METRO

Element of surprise

Metal mutts are not as tough as they look

At the beginning, Packer was pleasantly surprised that her creations weren't as fierce and hard as the chains of metal imply.

"The first dog I made was a Rottweiler, thinking that the rough edges of the broken metal pieces would loan to the dog's tough persona," she said. "But instead I was surprised to have created a sculpture that was more friendly and cute than intimidating." METRO

Emotional representation

Innermost thoughts shown through dog

In describing her artwork, Packer defines it as, "excitement, curiosity and fun."

"For me, this art is a reflection of my own emotions," Packer said.

"It's a representation of my thoughts from inside out. I love to weld metal and these chains are not heavy, surprisingly soft and flexible. Out of all the materials I use — keys, nails, watches — metal is my favourite." METRO

Artist's viewpoint

"The biggest challenge for me in this art is to capture the expressions that a real dog would typically make. Thankfully, this type of metal is very flexible."

Nirit Levav Packer, 49, from Tel Aviv

Feline find

Fossils unearthed believed to be from saber-toothed cat

Researchers say a pair of fossils unearthed in the hills north of Las Vegas belonged to a saber-toothed cat.

The Las Vegas Review-Journal reports that a team from California's San Bernardino County Museum identified the fossils dug up in June as being front leg bones from the extinct predator.

Kathleen Springer, the museum's senior curator, says the saber-tooth fossils are thought to be approximately 15,590 years old.

The discovery marks the first of its kind in the fossil-rich Upper Las Vegas Wash.

Springer says the bones of Las Vegas' only known saber-toothed cat are still being studied. There are no immediate plans to display them, but Springer expects that to happen eventually.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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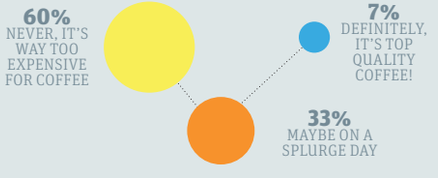

Twitter

@Vancouver: Big NFL game today in... Toronto? Does anybody think the Seahawks can take their division? #crunchtime #russellwilson http://ow.ly/g8JbC

@albertart: East Van Bazaar is bustling. Ran out of business cards. Quickly sketched some. #vancouver http://twitpic.com/bmljqw

@teaganmedves: The things you see downtown Vancouver at 3am when the clubs are closed! #ohlord

@HuynhCarol: My husband just got congratulated by an older Chinese guy for having a Chinese girlfriend while stopped at a red light...hilarious!

@Miss604: Christmas at Canada Place is on now - stop by the promenade like I did: http://ow.ly/g8PE7

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Leslie Mann stars in This is 40, a movie directed by her husband, Judd Apatow. HANDOUT

Keeping it all in the family

This is 40. Leslie Mann talks about working with her children on movies directed by her husband and what middle age is like

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News

Leslie Mann has made quite the career in husband Judd Apatow's movies, playing characters not too different from herself in Knocked Up, Funny People and now This is 40. In fact, much of the squabbling between Mann's Debbie and Paul Rudd's Pete in This is 40 was cultivated at home, making the film a kind of marriage counselling for the parents of two.

"It's like what I would fantasize about saying to Judd," Mann explains. "Like Debbie can say these things to Pete, but Leslie can't really say these things to Judd. It's fun to have this character to live through."

The film also gives Mann another chance to act alongside daughters Maude and Iris. (Like in Knocked Up, Mann and Apatow's real-life daughters co-star as Mann's character's kids.) But there can be trouble when her older daughter tries to take her work home with her, Mann admits.

"It's fun for Maude because we don't allow her to curse at home. I know she does at school," she says. "So it was fun for her to be able to do that at work, which I didn't think was a great idea, but Judd thinks is funny. So that's fun for her. But then she gets home from work and she tries to say the F-word or whatever and we have to shut her down."

Even with Apatow's brand of bold, uncomfortable comedy, Mann says she's game for anything. Of course, she had to draw the line somewhere, but that point has nothing to do with humorous or embarrassing situations.

"The only thing that made me feel uncomfortable in this movie is a scene with Iris when I'm laying in bed with her because it felt a little invasive," Mann admits. "I don't know why, because I can do anything else, but that for some reason felt a little like it was crossing some boundary. Just because everyone was sitting there watching me with my little girl doing what I do with my little girl, and I didn't like that."

As for life after 40, the actress — who hit the milestone herself last March — has found it to be a mixed bag.

"I think every day is different. Some days I feel fine and other days I feel like crying all day," she says. "I have lunches with my girlfriends who just turned 40, and some of those lunches we're crying and screaming about our husbands and saying we want to leave them and run away, and then other lunches we're fine and love our husbands and are happy with our lives."

One thing is for sure, though: A sequel about turning 50 would likely be darker.

"I keep asking women who are a little bit older when is this going to pass, and they're like, 'It doesn't pass. It just gets worse,'" Mann says.

A little on Brooks

Albert Brooks on being a parent in Hollywood

- **Dad.** Albert Brooks, who plays Paul Rudd's leech of a dad in This is 40, knows that it can be uniquely difficult to be a parent in Hollywood — especially around awards season. "I've got kids who are 14 and 12, and you try to keep them from going to the actual movies when they go to the movie theatre, but then you let them watch screeners. So we all gathered around and watched Flight, and it prompted a discussion of cocaine that I never wanted to have."

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METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Twitter

@jtimberlake
Seriously.... The whole Lower East Side of NY looks like Invasion Of The Drunken Santas! I'm not missing out on this next year...

@ElizabethHurley
Hate untangling Xmas lights ...

@kelly_clarkson
I'M ENGAGED!!!!! I wanted y'all to know!! Happiest night of my life last night! I am so lucky and am with the greatest man ever :)

@DanaDelany
Just home from work. Cold pepperoni pizza. Had to go for the red wine-cold rainy night of filming. 5am is like 5pm, right?

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The Word

L.A. Reid will not be back for X Factor's third season

Considering Demi Lovato and Simon Cowell's contentious behaviour and crazy-side-eyes on this season of The X Factor, it comes as some surprise that it's L.A. Reid who is the first casualty on the judge's panel. The stylishly-dressed music executive will not be coming back next season for the reality TV show.

THE WORD
Dorothy Robinson
scene@metronews.ca

"I have the utmost respect for Simon Cowell," Reid said Thursday in a statement. Reid claims he is going back to his job of running the Epic music label. "He is the very best, and I have had the opportunity to learn so much from him. Working with him on X Factor has been a once-in-a-lifetime experience. I'm honoured to have sat on the panel with such incredible talent. Of course, I will miss the show," Reid added. "In my opinion, Simon attracts the best talent, but I'm looking forward to getting back to my core business and the responsibility of running Epic Records."

Season 3 already has the go-ahead by Fox, but there's still no word on if Cowell's co-judges — Demi Lovato and Britney Spears — will be back.

Russell Crowe ALL IMAGES GETTY

Crowe denies reports and vows to 'bring family back together'

Russell Crowe is taking Page Six to task over reports that he's dating Katie Lee, ex-wife of Billy Joel, while he's separated from his own wife, Danielle Spencer.

"These latest reports are false and cruel," Crowe — who is currently filming A Winter's Tale in NYC and promoting Les Miserables — posted to Twitter.

"As soon as I finish this job and can get home, my priority is to try to bring my family back together."

Hugh Grant

Jon Stewart dubs Grant worst Daily Show guest

Jon Stewart recently revealed that Hugh Grant was the worst guest he'd ever had on The Daily Show and he would "never" be invited back, saying at the Montclair Film Festival last week that Grant was "giving everyone s— the whole time. He's a big pain in the ass." Well, Grant got the message, posting to Twitter, "Turns out my inner crab got the better of me with TV producer in '09. Unforgivable. J. Stewart correct to give me kicking."

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Kathy Buckworth,
kathybuckworth.com

As more airlines impose fees for checked bags, travellers are looking for ways to stuff their carry-on bags full and into overflowing overhead bins. But are you really getting something for free?

The disadvantages to checking a bag is (sometimes) the financial cost, wait times at the baggage carousel or having the bag delayed or lost.

But with a carry-on, downsides include jumping up to wait in line and get on the plane early to secure a bin, (within at least a few rows of your seat) and then hefting a huge bag over your (and others') heads or having to ask

for help to do so.

You're also limited to only 100 millilitres of any liquid (this includes alcohol). Not to mention the jammed in, wrinkled clothes, not having just the right shoes and pulling the suitcase through miles of airport.

And the time you saved? Your checked in pals used it to read an extra chapter, have another glass or visit the washroom in the airport, prior to boarding. Just make sure you consider the real cost, carefully. KATHY BUCKWORTH IS AN AWARD WINNING WRITER. VISIT KATHYBUCKWORTH.COM OR FOLLOW KATHY ON TWITTER @KATHYBUCKWORTH

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All Mommy wants for Christmas this year is a photo of you with Santa in which you're not crying hysterically. Follow along with the comedic (mis)adventures of mommyhood with Reasons Mommy Drinks online at metronews.ca/voices

Of wish lists, undesirable gifts and handling high expectations

Holiday demands. Christmas is a time of year when it's important to manage your kids' high hopes

MARY SHELL
Metro World News in New York

Your children may have wish lists a mile long, but Denise Schipani, author of Mean Moms Rule: Why Doing the Hard Stuff Now Creates Good Kids Later, says that when it comes to gifts, more stuff under the Christmas tree isn't necessarily more satisfying.

"The holidays can be sensory overload for adults. It can be that way for your child, too," she says.

Feeling overwhelmed at your children's overwhelming holiday demands? It's up to you to manage their expectations. They can't temper themselves in the throes of the holidays.

"My kids still believe in Santa Claus, and they make their lists," she says. But Schipani makes sure her kids understand these are wish lists and not just a rundown of what they'll get. Choosing one thing from the list allows you to surprise your child, she says. "There's a way for them to feel excited about getting stuff without getting greedy about it."

You won't be a Grinch if your child doesn't get everything they desire — not everybody gets everything they want.

"And when your kids ask for something that's too extravagant, Schipani points to a chapter in her book titled: Say 'No.' Smile. Don't Apologize. Repeat as Necessary.

"It's not damaging to say, 'No,'" she reminds.

On the big day, tune in to your kid's experience and how he or she is reacting to unwrapping the gifts. If there's a tantrum or you see your child's eyes glaze over, take note.

"The reason they're doing that might well be that you've overwhelmed them," she says.

And it's equally important to notice when you see your child stop and really engage with a toy. It means you've given your child something he or she really enjoys — a gift that's probably sufficient on its own.

Finally, remember to set a good example for your kids and take opportunities throughout the year to remind them of the great things they already have.

Avoid cultivating a "more is better" attitude, she notes. "Model the behaviour that you want to see."

Your relatives

When you can't control the grandparents...

- **Meaningful gifts.** "There are relatives that are not going to listen, no matter what," Schipani says. But try having a conversation with family members before the holidays. Tell them to consider whether gifts are age-appropriate or whether a combination of quality time and a meaningful gift might be better for your child than an iPod or Xbox."

Pay attention to your kids' reactions as they open gifts. ISTOCK

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Meatballs and Cranberry Marinara get the party started

Ingredients

- 3 eggs, beaten
- 1/4 cup finely chopped cilantro
- 1 tbsp finely chopped jalapeno slices
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tsp fennel seeds
- 2 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp onion powder
- 1/2 tsp red pepper flakes
- Kosher salt and ground black pepper
- 3 lbs ground beef (93 per cent lean)
- 14-oz can whole berry cranberry sauce
- 15-oz can diced tomatoes
- Splash of hot sauce

This recipe makes 50 meatballs. MATTHEW MEAD/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

1. Heat the oven to 425 F. Coat a rimmed baking sheet with cooking spray.

2. In a large bowl, combine the eggs, cilantro, jalapenos, garlic, fennel, oregano, onion powder, red pepper flakes, 2 teaspoons of salt and 1/2 teaspoon of pepper. Whisk until well combined. Add the ground beef, then mix gently until completely blended. Divide the mixture into 50 balls, using about 2 tablespoons of the mixture per ball. Arrange the meatballs on the prepared baking sheet.

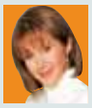
3. Place the baking sheet in the oven and bake the meatballs for 20 minutes. Increase heat to broil and cook for another 1 to 2 minutes, or until lightly browned.

4. Meanwhile, in a medium saucepan over medium heat, combine the cranberry sauce and diced tomatoes. Bring to a simmer. Season with salt and pepper, and a splash of hot sauce.

5. When meatballs are done, arrange on a platter, then spoon the cranberry mixture over them. Serve with toothpicks. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Healthy eating

Choose it and lose it



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Tolkien literature to the next level

J.R.R.101. University's hefty collection of author's materials attracting students fascinated by fantastic works

Marquette University professor Tim Machan teaches a class on J.R.R. Tolkien that focuses on all of his books, books that influenced Tolkien and other tidbits about the writer. CARRIE ANTLFINGER / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The vast collection of J.R.R. Tolkien manuscripts initially sold senior Joe Kirchoff on Marquette University, so when the school offered its first course devoted exclusively to the English author, Kirchoff wanted in. The only problem: It was full and he wasn't on the literature track.

Undaunted, the 22-year-old political science and history major lobbied the English department and others starting last spring and through the summer and "kind of just made myself a problem," he said. His persistence paid off.

"It's a fantastic course," said Kirchoff, a Chicago native. "It's a great way to look at something that's such a creative work of genius in such a way you really come to understand the man behind it."

He and the 31 other students can now boast of their authority about the author, who influenced much of today's high fantasy writing. The course was taught for the first time this fall as part of the university's celebration of the 75th anniversary of The Hobbit being published. And class wrapped up just before the film, The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey, was released Friday.

The class, which filled up fast with mostly seniors who had first dibs, looked at Tolkien as a whole, not just the popular Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit. Students took their final exam this week, and the course was so well received, Marquette is considering more in the future.

"It's the best class I've had in 27 years here ... for student preparation, interest and enthusiasm," said English professor Tim Machan. "And I can throw out any topic and they will have read the material and they want to talk about the material."

Though Tolkien classes aren't unusual nationwide, Marquette students had the added bonus of being able to visit Tolkien's revisions, notes, detailed calendars, maps and watercolours on site at the school's archive. And they got a lesson from the school's archivist Bill Fliss.

"One of the things we wanted to impress upon the students was the fact that Tolkien was a fanatical reviser," Fliss said. "He never really did anything once and was finished with it."

Chrissy Wabiszewski, a senior English major, described Tolkien's manuscripts as art.

"When you get down and look at just his script and his artwork in general, it all kind of flows together in this really beautiful, like, cumulative form," Wabiszewski said. "It's cool. It is just really cool to have it here."

The class also looked at Tolkien's poetry, academic articles and translations of medieval poems; talked about the importance of his writers' group, the Inklings; and explored what it meant to be a writer at that time.

"We've ... tried to think about continuities that ran through everything he did," Machan said. His students were also required to go to three lectures that were part of Marquette's commemoration.

The Hobbit, a tale of homebody Bilbo Baggins' journey, is set in Tolkien's fictional realm of Middle-earth and takes place 60 years before The Lord of the Rings. The movie released Friday is the first of the trilogy. The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug is expected to be released on Dec. 13, 2013, and a third film will come out in the summer of 2014.

Most of the students were just finishing elementary school when the first Lord of the Rings film was released 11 years ago.

Kirchoff said he started reading The Hobbit and the Lord of the Rings when he was in fourth grade, before the movies came out. He said the movies have introduced others to Tolkien's ideas, making his love for Tolkien's fantasy worlds more socially acceptable.

"The movies were fantastic enough and engaging enough to coexist in my mind with the literature I really do love," he said.

Wabiszewski said it's clear her classmates weren't just taking the class as a filler.

"I definitely expected the enthusiasm from everybody, but just the knowledge that everybody brought into the class, it's cool," she said. "We really have a smart group of people in that class who have a lot to offer."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lord of the reads

History of a creative collection

Marquette University is one of the main repositories of Tolkien's drafts, drawings and other writings — more than 11,000 pages.

- It has the manuscripts for The Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit, as well as his lesser-known Farmer Giles of Ham and his children's book Mr. Bliss. Marquette was the first institution to ask Tolkien for the manuscripts in 1956 and paid him about $5,000.
- The university acquired the manuscripts after it hired William Ready in 1956 to build its literary collection. Ready, who became interested in Tolkien after reading The Hobbit, in turn hired Bertram Rota, a London rare book dealer, to serve as the agent for Marquette.
- Rota wrote to Tolkien and asked for his original manuscripts. Tolkien happened to be worried about his retirement finances and agreed to the sale. Tolkien died in 1973.

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Name: Sarah Prevette
City: Toronto
Age: 30
Occupation: Founder and CEO of Sprouter

THE IN-CREDIBILITY FACTOR
Teresa Kruze
life@metronews.ca

Sarah Prevette. PROVIDED

Sarah Prevette has been hailed as one of the top entrepreneurs in North America. With her work profiled in the Wall Street Journal and Forbes magazine, Prevette is credited with assisting more than 100,000 start-ups around the world through her online company. Sprouter was acquired by the Post Media Network in 2011, but she still runs the company and has started a new venture called BetaKit that is focused on identifying emerging technology trends for Fortune 500 companies.

I knew I was on my way when ... someone came up to me and told me how Sprouter had affected their life. It was profoundly moving to have someone give credit to something you had built as a reason for their success. The incredible feedback from the community continues to be a motivating factor for all of us. I hope I can look back one day and say I acted on my ambitions and that I left the world a better place.

Action Plan

Don't isolate yourself
Get out early, get feedback and talk to your potential market.

Adjust your course
Iterate based on feedback from your potential market and understand it's a continuous evolution of your business.

Fall in love with the problem, not the solution.
Be focused on the core issue you are trying to solve. You can always change the solution. Don't get caught up in features and functionality.

When it comes to successful studying, give yourself a hand

Typing up a lecture may now be the norm, but the link between scribing and success cannot be written off. ISTOCK

The write stuff.
Movement and memory a winning classroom combination

What do fingers and hands have to do with how well studied material can be recalled?

According to research, the physical act of holding a pen and writing something out by hand stimulates critical activity in specific areas of the brain.

In a recent study, one group learned the alphabet by writing the letters out by hand. The other group read solely off computers. The group who wrote out the letters by hand had better recall and scored better on tests.

According to Dr. Nick Whitehead, the CEO and founder of Oxford Learning, these studies prove what educators have long known about studying and remembering,

"There are many different ways to approach the process of studying, but one of the best-known has always been to create study notes using pen and paper," he said.

Duly noted

How to create study notes

- Grab a pen and paper
- Read over all in-class or textbook notes.
- Write down subject headings, subheadings, and bolded or key words.
- Focus on writing down the ideas or concepts that are the most challenging, or that are the most difficult to remember.

The pen is mightiest

"There are many different ways to approach the process of studying, but one of the best-known has always been to create study notes using pen and paper."
Dr. Nick Whitehead
CEO and founder of Oxford Learning

It may seem an old-fashioned practice given the abundance of personal technology that students have at their fingertips, but the act of physically writing creates a motor memory in the brain that improves recall.

Not only do study notes help students organize the material, but the act of holding the pen and writing notes makes the study process active rather than passive.

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Sandy Hook tragedy

NFL pays tribute to shooting victims

The New England Patriots silenced their "End Zone Militia" on Sunday night, paying tribute to the victims of the Connecticut school shooting by cancelling the traditional scoring celebration in which men dressed as Revolutionary War soldiers fire muskets into the air.

Two days after 20 children and six adults were shot to death at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn., the Patriots joined teams across the NFL that honoured the victims' memory by asking for a moment of silence.

New York Giants receiver Victor Cruz, after learning that he was the favourite player of one six-year-old victim, wrote "R.I.P. Jack Pinto," "Jack Pinto, my hero" and "This one is for you" on his shoes for the Giants game against the Falcons. Cruz said he called the boy's family after hearing he was a Giants fan and was told they planned to bury him in one of Cruz's No. 80 jerseys.

"I don't even know how to put it into words," Cruz said. "There are no words that can describe the type of feeling that you get when a kid idolizes you so much that unfortunately they want to put him in the casket with your jersey on. I can't even explain it."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Colts guard Mike McGlynn bows his head during a moment of silence for the victims of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NFL. Packers lock up NFC North with win over Bears

The Green Bay Packers clinched their second straight NFC North title with a 21-13 victory over the archrival Chicago Bears on Sunday.

James Jones caught all three touchdown passes thrown by the Packers' Aaron Rodgers. Green Bay has now won six straight in the NFL's oldest — and fiercest — rivalry.

The Packers (10-4) have won 12 straight against NFC North opponents, the longest streak in the NFL.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Packers receiver James Jones celebrates one of his three touchdown catches on Sunday in Chicago. GETTY IMAGES

NFL. 49ers hang on to win wild one in Foxborough

The San Francisco 49ers earned a playoff berth by withstanding a stunning comeback by New England from a 28-point deficit to beat the Patriots 41-34 on Sunday night in the rain.

Michael Crabtree took a short pass from Colin Kaepernick and sped around cornerback Kyle Arrington for a 38-yard touchdown with 6:25 to go, then David Akers made a 28-yard field goal to clinch it.

San Francisco (10-3-1) owns at least a wild-card spot and plays at Seattle next week with a chance to win the NFC West. A loss would bring the division race down to the final weekend. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Pats' streak broken

AFC East champion New England (10-4), which had won seven in a row, trailed 31-3 at one point and lost for the first time at home in December in 21 games.

Wilson has Seahawks offence in a groove

NFL. Rookie quarterback leading an attack that surpassed 50 points for second straight week

Russell Wilson has the Seattle Seahawks on a historic roll.

The rookie quarterback rushed for three TDs and threw for another as Seattle steamrolled past the Buffalo Bills 50-17 on Sunday afternoon in Toronto. It marked the second straight week the Seahawks had scored 50 or more points, making them just the third NFL team ever to accomplish the feat and first since 1950.

"We're definitely clicking well," Wilson said. "Guys are just playing great football, that's what it really comes down to, guys making awesome plays and just making the consistent plays.

"You have to be consistent in this game and we're actually doing that right now."

Wilson, a 2012 third-round pick, thrilled the Rogers Centre gathering of 40,770 by becoming the first player in NFL history to register three rushing TDs and one passing in a half in staking Seattle to a 31-17 lead. He guided the Seahawks (9-5) to their fifth win in six games and assured the club of its first winning season since it went 10-6 in 2007. Last week, Seattle defeated Arizona 58-0.

Rogers Centre continues to be a black hole for Buffalo (5-9), which fell to 1-4 in regular-season games there since the inception of the Bills Toronto Series in 2008.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"We know whatever we're calling, something good can happen. He's got it nailed."

Seahawks coach Pete Carroll couldn't praise quarterback Russell Wilson enough.

Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson beats Bills strong safety George Wilson to the corner for his third TD on Sunday in Toronto. STEVE RUSSELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Cys matter: Jays working on trade for Dickey

According to reports, the Blue Jays have a deal in place to acquire National League Cy Young winner R.A. Dickey from the Mets. Dickey went 20-6 in 2012 with a 2.73 ERA. ALEX TRAUTWIG/GETTY IMAGES FILE

The Blue Jays' rumoured blockbuster acquisition of NL Cy Young Award winner R.A. Dickey seems to have come down to 72 hours of direct negotiation with the player.

After two days of intense talks, the Jays and Mets, according to a Fox Sports report, have an agreement in principle including seven players. The Mets have given Jays general manager Alex Anthopoulos until Tuesday at 2 p.m. to talk to the 38-year-old Dickey, who has one year left on his contract, and work out a two-year extension through 2015.

The knuckleballer is rumoured to be going to the Jays along with his personal catcher, Josh Thole, and an unnamed prospect for catchers Travis d'Arnaud and John Buck, pitcher Noah Syndergaard and another prospect.

D'Arnaud and Syndergaard are the No. 1 and No. 3 prospects in the Jays organization, according to MLB.com.

The Jays would likely pull out of any proposed deal if they could not work out the extension with Dickey. At the end of the season, the Mets picked up a club option on the knuckleballer for a very reasonable $5 million US, but were looking to lock up the Nashville native for another two seasons. Foiled, they decided to explore a trade.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Upside out the door?

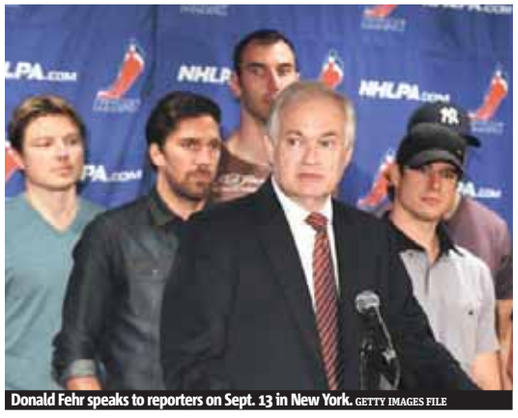
The 23-year-old d'Arnaud was due to arrive in the majors in 2013. He was the 2011 Double-A Eastern League MVP, and was off to a terrific start in Triple-A this year before suffering a torn left knee ligament in June.

- Noah Syndergaard, 20, was one of the Jays' big three pitching prospects at Lansing in the Class-A Midwest League, posting a 2.60 ERA in 103 2/3 innings with 31 walks and 103 strikeouts.

4 SPORTS

Courting disaster? NHLPA to vote on dissolving union

NHL. Lockout talks may shift from boardroom to courtroom with no end in sight


Donald Fehr speaks to reporters on Sept. 13 in New York. GETTY IMAGES FILE

A critical vote was set to begin Sunday that will determine if the NHL labour battle moves from the negotiating table to the courtroom.

The players are casting their ballots on whether or not to give their executive board the authority to dissolve the NHL Players' Association.

Doing so would allow the board to file a disclaimer of interest, which is a step toward disbanding the union and giving the players the chance to file anti-trust lawsuits against the league.

Two-thirds of the union's membership must vote in favour of the move over a five-day period that ends Thursday, then the union executive board must respond.

The league has already taken some pre-emptive action after it filed a class-action complaint on Friday that asked a federal court in New York to make a declaration on the legality of the lockout.

The NHL also filed an unfair labour practice charge with the U.S. National Labor Relations Board.

The union was quick to respond with a statement on Friday night that suggested the league was overstepping its bounds. At that point, it had yet to even be served with the lawsuit.

"The NHL appears to be arguing that players should be stopped from even considering their right to decide whether or not to be represented by a union," it read. "We believe that their position is completely without merit."

Despite the focus of the lockout shifting from the board room to the courtroom, there is nothing preventing the sides from continuing to try to negotiate with one another. They met separately over two days with a U.S. federal mediator this week in New Jersey but failed to make any progress.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

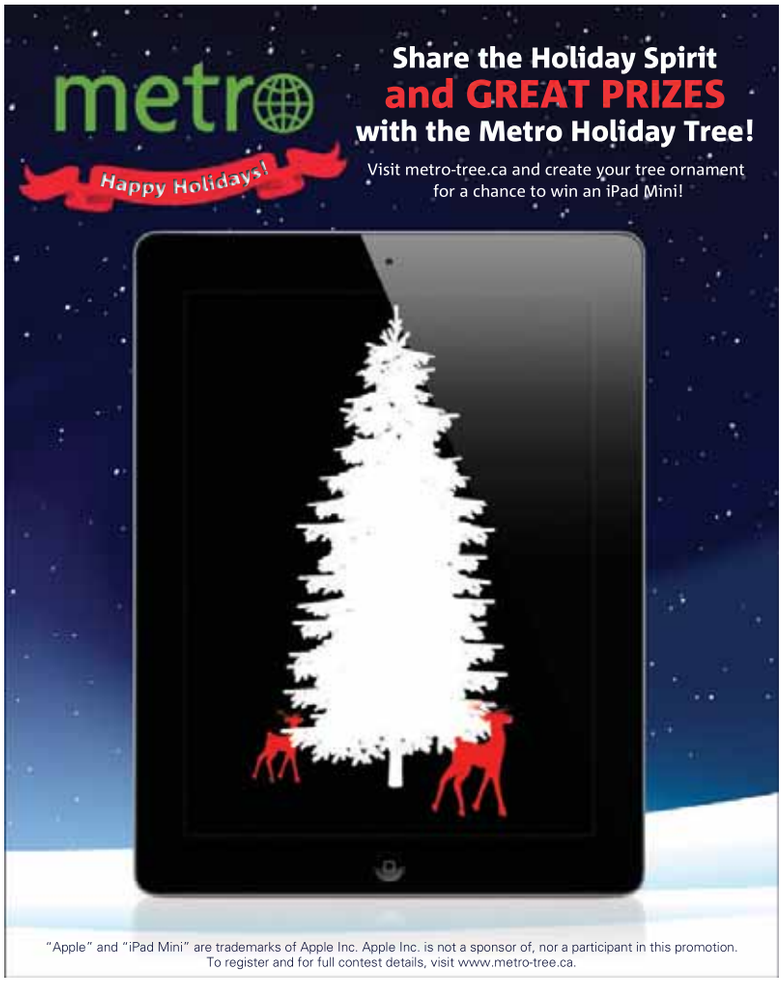
High stakes

By filing the class-action complaint in New York, the NHL guaranteed that the legality of the lockout would be decided in a court known to be sympathetic towards management.

- If the NHLPA files for a "disclaimer of interest" it will seek to have the work stoppage deemed illegal — something that could see players paid triple their lost salary in damages if successful.

Another win for the Raptors

Houston Rockets guard James Harden drives to the basket against the Raptors' Amir Johnson on Sunday in Toronto. The winning continued for the Raptors — for one game at least. Jose Calderon had 18 points, 10 rebounds and 14 assists to lead the short-handed Raptors to a 103-96 win over the Rockets, marking the first time Toronto has won consecutive games in eight long months. AARON VINCENT ELKAIM/THE CANADIAN PRESS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Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
Thinking about what might have been is a complete waste of time. You will always get the chance to do things in the future that make up for what you did, or did not do, in the past. Why worry?

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
You are in a can-do mood at the moment and that's good because the planets indicate that if you make an effort, the results will be spectacular. Jupiter in the money area of your chart could make you a fortune!

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Anything is possible if you want it enough — yes, anything. Identify what it is you most want to accomplish then just go for it, and ignore those who say you are being irresponsible. What do they know? Nothing!

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
If there is something you wanted to finish but for one reason or another failed to see through to the end, don't worry, you'll get another chance. Is it the last chance? Maybe not, but do you want to risk it?

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
You can sense that if you want to make changes to your lifestyle you are going to have to make them soon. You have spent enough time thinking and planning, now you must act. It's now or never.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Don't think about what you intend to do. Just do it and let the situation unfold according to its own momentum. The year is too old to make detailed plans. Just take each day, and moment, as it comes.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Try not to tie yourself down to tasks and chores that can be done at any time. Jupiter in your fellow Air sign of Gemini urges you to be adventurous today. Go some place you have never been to before.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 2 04 - Nov. 22
It might be wise not to get too involved in something your friends are clearly enthused about. Don't worry that you might be missing out. On the contrary, you're making time for more important things.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
It may be a bit too easy to lose your sense of perspective today as mind planet Mercury opposes Jupiter in your opposite sign. Something will annoy you for sure but you don't have to take it seriously.

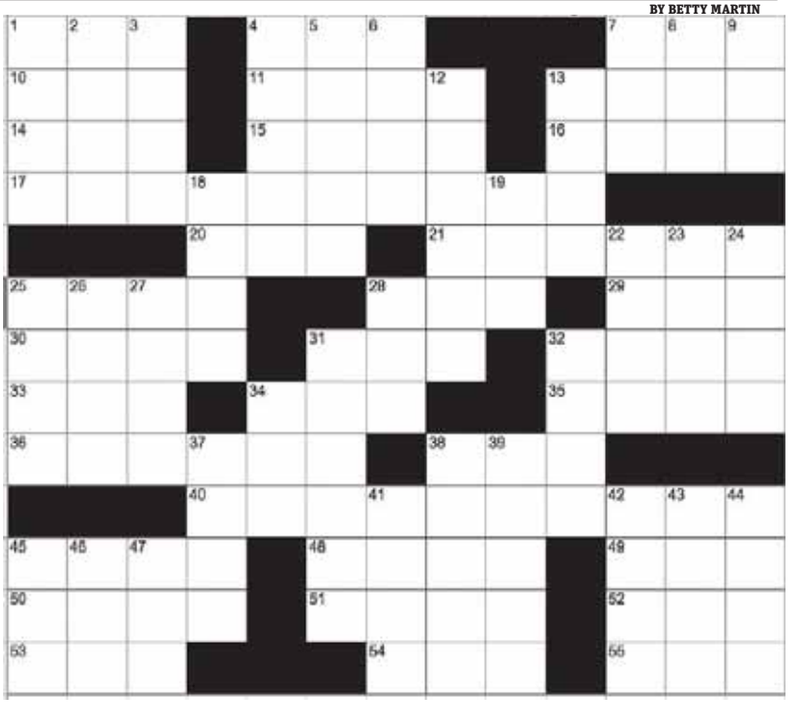
♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You should be promoting yourself for all you are worth, not only because you are worth more than your rivals but because you have something valuable to offer. Leave your mark on the world and make it a big one.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You won't lack for courage or confidence today but you must make sure they are well directed. This is the perfect time to take a creative endeavour to a higher level. Believe you can do it and you'll find a way.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
If you have promised to do something for a loved one then you must do it — immediately. Yes, of course, you did not realize that other factors would come into play but that's irrelevant. Promises must be kept. SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword

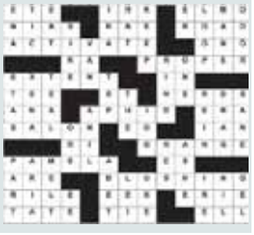
BY BETTY MARTIN



Across
1. Droop in the middle
4. Vacation spot
7. School org.
10. Airport listing
11. Fake fanfare
13. Gait
14. Follower (suffix)
15. Strong handsome horse
16. "Panic —"
17. On the up and up
20. Matter, in law
21. Aftershock
25. Take from the top
28. L.A. Law actress Susan —
29. Gardner of Hollywood
30. Zing
31. Nickname for comedian Bill
32. Shut the door forcefully
33. Founded (abbr.)
34. Touch lightly
35. Jazz great Fitzgerald
36. Front runner
38. Dutch city
40. Give a hand to
45. Group
48. Dublin's land
49. The Naked Truth actress Leoni
50. — of Green Gables
51. Squeal
52. Flub
53. To soak
54. Snake sound
55. Unruly crowd

Down
1. Leave port
2. Comic actor Johnson
3. "Little Miss Sunshine" actor Kinnear
4. Aver
5. French capital
6. Sandler or Baldwin
7. In favour of
8. — Close for Comfort
9. Banking machine (abbr.)
12. Wanes
13. "A — Grows in Brooklyn"
18. Take the creases out
19. Attempt
22. Shopping mecca
23. Racetrack shape
24. Hindu deity
25. Rod accompaniment
26. Threat ending
27. Computer input
28. Speck
31. Kind of beetle
32. Grain
34. Vigor
37. Title for Judi Dench
38. Noblemen
39. Some showdowns
41. Perjures
42. Discussion point
43. Roman Emperor
44. Clothing
45. Road surface
46. Compass bearing (abbr.)
47. Picnic pest

Friday's Crossword



What's online

See today's answers metronews.ca/answers.

Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Friday's Sudoku

5	9	1	8	4	2	6	3	7
3	2	6	7	1	5	9	8	4
8	7	4	6	3	9	5	2	1
1	5	7	3	9	6	8	4	2
2	4	9	1	5	8	3	7	6
6	3	8	4	2	7	1	9	5
4	1	2	5	8	3	7	6	9
7	8	5	9	6	4	2	1	3
9	6	3	2	7	1	4	5	8

6			5	1	3			2
					2	7		
	1	2	4			6		
1	8		7		9	3		4
2								9
7		3	8		4		5	6
		5			7	9	6	
		1	2					
8			3	9	5			1

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